

PRESS INTERVIEW

WITH

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AT

WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE

WASHINGTON, PA

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(Questioners: Mr. Earl Bugaile, WKEG News
Director, Washington, Pa., and Mr. Bob Robertson
reporter for Washington Observer-Reporter)

BUGAILE: With the CIA's image to the general public overall, what are you doing to try to better your image at this point after that investigation?

KNOCHE: Well, I think that one positive effect of the investigation was that it made the subject of intelligence and the question of how American intelligence can fit into the constitutional framework, it made that subject something fit for proper discussion. Up until the time of the investigations, examinations, secrecy and silence were the watchwords in intelligence as it is in intelligence activities of any other government around the world. But in America we have a very special system built on checks and balances, and we at CIA are proud of ourselves and consider ourselves essential to the American government's ability to confront problems around the world. We believe now that the time has come, and it's already been well demonstrated, that we will have new guidelines which match the mid-70's. We are adjusting to those guidelines as we move into the future. We have improved oversight from the Congress; we have improved oversight from the Executive; and we have improved oversight internally at the Agency. So without looking back we learn from the past and concentrate on the future.

BUGAILE: What do you think the general public's attitude is now towards the CIA?

KNOCHE: Well, I think its problem -- and this has been true for quite some time, even before the investigation -- is the image of intelligence -- James Bond, 007, Maxwell Smart, and his shoe, the Hollywood movies and TV programs. It's all shoot-em up, it's all violence, it's all instant reprisal, and far from the image of intelligence which is really a kind of prosaic and scholarly pursuit by taking bits and pieces of information from a variety of sources and trying to bring judgments about the state of the world and the nature of problems current and future. What we are trying to do about this, the mere fact that I'm giving this interview, having this discussion with you, and the mere fact that I am here at the homecoming festivities at Washington and Jefferson College to speak at a banquet tonight, demonstrates the new feeling we have in the American intelligence, that we are accountable to the people, the President, the Congress, to ourselves. And the American public must come to understand what intelligence is and what it isn't, and we've got to do our part to try to explain what we're about, without spilling secrets. Secrets are vital to our business and must be maintained in order for us to do this kind of work that we are

public's understanding. They can like us or not like us, they can have their suspicions about us. They can concentrate on the nature of controls that are required for national intelligence. But all these things are, I think, good for public discussion and debate.

BUGAILE: What do you feel - what does CIA feel -- about the recent opening of investigations on the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King. What do you think is the feeling in CIA about that?

KNOCHE: Well, those are subjects that will forever, I would image, be subjects which are surrounded by curiosity, uncertainty. I'm not at all sure that anyone is going to be able to construct the precise facts that obtain, and I am not in a position really to comment, on what the new inquiries will result in. Certainly, the CIA will cooperate with those investigators. The unfortunate Kennedy assassination took place some 13 years ago. We made very full disclosures at the time to the Warren Commission. There is some puzzlement as to whether or not certain kinds of information might in hindsight have been turned over to the commission. I'm not in a position to comment on that. I think the inquiry will have to look into that and satisfy itself. But when one has to try to prove the negative, that is, prove that the CIA was not involved, or prove that the FBI was not involved, prove that

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the Cubans were not involved, prove that the Soviets were not involved, proving the negative is almost impossible. And inquiries may help, but my hunch is that uncertainty will continue in the future.

ROBERTSON: Well, then, Mr. Knoche, you think essentially that you will continue to operate the same as you have insofar as intelligence gathering and the basic operations at CIA?

KNOCHE: Basically our task has been reemphasized and underlined in the President's Executive Order of February, 11905, which now explains our missions for us and gives us new guidelines. When you say will we operate the same way, the answer is yes and no. Our mission was reaffirmed, the essential nature of CIA was reemphasized, but there are new guidelines and new restrictions which are designed to protect the rights of American citizens and guarantee their privacy and constitutional rights, rights and privileges guaranteed by the constitution. We are adjusting to those guidelines, we have advised our internal directorates, and we've seen to it that we'll follow those guidelines and we consider ourselves a professional, disciplined, highly-motivated, well-qualified professional service, and we have no intention nor desire to get out beyond the limits of our charter and the limits of the new guidelines. I have no doubt that over the years ahead

American intelligence will continue to function, to continue to regard it as important; but guidelines may change, just as society (two words unclear) laws change.

BUGAILE: There is an, I think, still an overriding concern among the American people today about eavesdropping and so forth, about telephone bugging -- is it as bad as people think, is it as serious, do you think that the general public thinks?

KNOCHE: I think there is a legitimate concern in this area as the technology surrounding the American intelligence activities is growing and intensifying, but I think I can assure you, and through you, the American people, that there is wisdom in the process about which we handle that kind of thing now. Those of us charged with responsibility in this area must first of all understand technologies so that it doesn't run wild, and understanding the technology is the first step in controlling it. It is a difficult area and one that I am very confident that we can meet, that is using technology without (several words indistinct) the intelligence community and big brother.

BUGAILE: Why must we have secrecy?

KNOCHE: The government requires two forms of secrecy to get its business done and protect itself. One form of secrecy surrounds our own so-called "state affairs", the size and capability of our armed forces, our battle plans for war, the foreign policy which may be

under consideration for a hot spot like South Africa, or troubles in the Carribean, the exact dimensions of those I am sure no right thinking American would want (words indistinct) for obvious reasons. The intelligence world, secrets are employed and secrecy systems used for different purposes. Under the law, the Director of Central Intelligence is responsible for protecting intelligence sources and methods from disclosure. There is a common view that we have secrets in the intelligence community simply because we don't want bad stories about us and embarrassments or abuses to be uncovered. That is simply absurd. Nobody wants abuses. We can't abide them internally, the President doesn't permit it, the Congress won't permit it, and there is nothing to (words indistinct). The second thing is that we have secrets in order to keep the American people in the dark, that there is some ground in Washington controlling all, hearing all, and that we need secrecy for that purpose. The simple reason for secrecy is that we employ a variety of sources to require information that our government needs to know about the state of the world, some of the human, some of them are technological. In any event, once disclosed a potential adversary can take steps to dry up our sources, and in the case of (several words indistinct). So to protect our (several words indistinct) sources, we must have secrecy and

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you and I can talk about the nature of intelligence,
the role of intelligence, importance of intelligence,
but the specifics of sources and methods is
something to vitalize (several words indistinct).